

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A device for processing slaughtered animals or parts thereof, having a first station and a second station, comprising:

- a conveyor which extends between the first station and the second station and which comprises at least one slot with a width and a course, which at least one slot is designed to carry and support the slaughtered animals or parts thereof;

10 - supply means for supplying the slaughtered animals or parts thereof at the first station on the conveyor,

- discharge means for discharging the slaughtered animals or parts thereof from the conveyor at the second station; and

15 - at least one driven driving member which passes through a path which is substantially parallel to the course of the at least one slot and is designed to move the slaughtered animals or parts thereof which are situated in the at least one slot along the at least one slot from the first station towards 20 the second station, along the at least one slot, wherein the at least one driving member spans at least half the width of the at least one slot.

2. The device of claim 1, wherein the at least one driving member can adopt a first position and a second position, in 25 which the slaughtered animals or parts thereof can and cannot, respectively, be moved from the first station towards the second station.

3. The device of claim 1, wherein the at least one driving member can rotate about an axis which is substantially 30 perpendicular to the path covered by the at least one driving member.

4. The device of claim 1, wherein the at least one driving member comprises at least one arm which is designed to transmit the movement of the at least one driving member to the 35 slaughtered animals or parts thereof.

5. The device of claim 2, comprising force means which exert a force on the at least one driving member, which force opposes the movement of the at least one driving member from the first position towards the second position.

6. The device of claim 5, wherein the force means comprise spring means.

7. The device of claim 5, wherein the force means comprise a controllable piston-cylinder device.

5 8. The device of claim 7, wherein the piston/cylinder device can make the at least one driving member adopt any desired position between the first position and the second position.

9. The device of claim 1, wherein the supply means are 10 designed to selectively supply the slaughtered animals or parts thereof to the at least one slot and/or the discharge means are designed to selectively discharge the slaughtered animals or parts thereof from the at least one slot.

10. The device of claim 9, wherein the supply means comprise 15 a switching mechanism which can be moved into a first switched position and a second switched position, in which the slaughtered animals or parts thereof are and are not, respectively, supplied to the at least one slot.

11. The device of claim 9, wherein the supply means and/or 20 the discharge means are controlled by supply-control means and discharge-control means on the basis of data relating to the slaughtered animals or parts thereof to be transferred.

12. The device of claim 1, wherein the supply means and/or 25 the discharge means comprise at least one disc which is driven in rotation and is designed to supply or remove the slaughtered animals or parts thereof one by one to or from the at least one slot, and which is provided on its circumference with at least one holding slot which opens out on the outer circumference of the at least one rotatably driven disc and is designed to carry 30 and support at least one slaughtered animal or part of a slaughtered animal.

13. The device of claim 12, wherein the at least one rotatably driven disc has at least two holding slots.

14. The device of claim 12, wherein the at least one 35 rotatably driven disc of the discharge means transfers the slaughtered animals or parts thereof into a stationary waiting slot.

15. The device of claim 1, wherein the at least one slot extends substantially in a horizontal plane.

16. The device according to one of the preceding claims, wherein the at least one slot has a substantially curved course.

17. The device of claim 1, wherein the at least one slot has a substantially straight course.

5 18. The device of claim 1, wherein an unloading device is provided inside the slot.

19. The device of claim 18, wherein the unloading device is designed to locally widen the at least one slot.

20. The device of claim 19, wherein the unloading device comprises a support member which defines a section of the at least one slot and can move substantially transversely with respect to the direction of the slot, for locally increasing the width of the slot.

21. The device of claim 18, wherein unloading-control means are provided for controlling the unloading device.

15 22. The device of claim 1, wherein a weighing device is incorporated in the at least one slot for weighing the slaughtered animals or parts thereof.

23. The device of claims 22, wherein the unloading-control means record the weight of the slaughtered animals or parts thereof which has been detected by the weighing device and control the unloading device on the basis of this data.

20 24. The device of claim 1, wherein a processing device is provided along the course of the at least one slot, for processing the slaughtered animals or parts thereof.

25 25. The device of claim 24, wherein the processing device comprises at least one frictional surface which is arranged along the at least one slot and is designed to act on part of the slaughtered animals or parts thereof.

30 26. The device of claim 25, wherein the frictional surface forms part of a driven conveyor belt.

27. The device of claim 26, wherein the processing device comprises two driven conveyor belts which are arranged on either side of the at least one slot, for clamping a part of the slaughtered animals or parts thereof between them.

35 28. The device of claim 26, wherein the processing device comprises at least two driven conveyor belts which are arranged one behind the other along the at least one slot.

29. The device of claim 27, wherein the direction of movement of a first conveyor belt differs from that of a second conveyor belt.

30. The device of ~~claim 27~~, wherein the speed of movement of a first conveyor belt differs from that of a second conveyor belt.